

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: CULTURE Sub: music facility

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT Sub:
CULTURE sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

CLASSICAL REVIVAL

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: Granite
roof ASPHALT
walls STONE: Limestone
CONCRETE
other

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

PERFORMING ARTS
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance 1934 -1949

Significant Dates 1934

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder LaBeaume & Klein
Kiel-Boaz Construction Company
Ellerbe Becket Architects

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.4 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone Easting	Northing	Zone Easting	Northing	
1	<u>15</u>	<u>743550</u>	<u>4279150</u>	3	_____
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynn Josse, Research Associate

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date October 19, 1999

street & number 917 Locust 7th Floor telephone (314) 421-6474

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63101-1413

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of St. Louis (Darlene Green, Comptroller)

street & number City Hall, 1200 Market Street telephone (314) 622-3297

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63103

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary

Kiel Opera House is a grand limestone-clad civic facility built between 1932-1934 in an Art Deco interpretation of the Classical Revival style. Its facade commands 322 feet of Market Street frontage on the Memorial Plaza as part of St. Louis' most significant grouping of civic institutional buildings. The facade is dominated by a projecting center block with a two-story eight-column Corinthian portico over seven front doors. The colonnade is flanked by wide, austere end blocks bearing large incised quotations. Set back about 25 feet to either side, the main volume of the original building is three stories high. The original Opera House extends south approximately 250 feet, where it is met by a large new auditorium. The building includes an approximately 3500-seat main theater with a front two-story lobby, four small side theaters or halls (with a capacity of up to 700 seats each), an exposition hall, basement cafeteria space, offices, dressing rooms, and other support spaces for the facility, as well as a new arena which seats approximately 18,000. The major original extant interior spaces are substantially intact.

Kiel Opera House was originally part of the Municipal Auditorium complex, which included an attached convention hall to the south. In 1994 the convention hall was torn down and replaced with a large sports arena. The non-contributing arena overshadows the Opera House only from its subordinate rear elevation; it is of minor impact on the building's important primary facade or its historic significance as a home for cultural events in St. Louis for six decades.

The exterior condition appears to be good in both the historic and non-historic sections. The interior condition varies; the main public spaces of the original Opera House appear to have some cosmetic problems including flaking paint and minimal plaster damage. Secondary spaces vary in condition from excellent to fair.

Site

Kiel Opera House is sited with its primary facade occupying the entire south side of the 1400 block of Market Street in downtown St. Louis. It occupies all of City Blocks 209E, 209W, and 210S. Its footprint, which includes a large non-contributing addition, spreads L-shaped across the three blocks. The Opera House site is surrounded by public streets on all sides and is attached to the Kiel Garage, a separate structure, at the southern end of the west side. The site slopes gently down to the east; steps and foundation lines are adjusted accordingly.

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

At the front of the building, a broad granite patio follows the setbacks of the building. Steps, almost as wide as the front block of the facade, lead down to the wide Market Street sidewalk. Two flagpoles on copper bases are set on platforms in the steps. At either side of the steps are platforms supporting large carved limestone bears by sculptors Victor Holm and Robert Cronbach. Limestone balustrades with pierced squares follow the line of the patio to side steps east and west. In the grassy area at either side of the bears is a copper-framed sign marked "AUDITORIUM" in copper and neon to proclaim current events.

Exterior

The original Kiel Opera House is styled in a Moderne-influenced version of Classical Revival, expressed primarily in the large Corinthian peristyle at the facade (Photos 1 & 2). This style is appropriate to the building's place as part of a monumental downtown building group; with the exception of the French Renaissance City Hall and the Federal Courthouse, all of the buildings on the Memorial Plaza are unified by their inspiration from classical architecture. Moderne hints, telling of the period of design and construction, are found in the details and to some extent in the overall massing of the building. The non-contributing addition to the south is in a contemporary style; its glass and concrete exterior contrasts with the limestone cladding of the original building. Both buildings use granite at the base - a light white and grey speckle at the original section, and black granite at portions of the addition.

The architects of the original section, LaBeaume & Klein, moved freely between different traditions to arrive at the decorative scheme for the building. The essentially Roman portico is echoed by Art Deco capitals on the pilaster behind, and the whole rests on a Greek key course. A few examples of Egyptian ornament are also found.

Kiel Opera House's facade is divided into three parts, a center block with symmetrical wings set back to either side. At the first story of the main block, seven sets of boarded double doors are each crowned by a single squared panel representing the Greek masks of comedy and tragedy in low relief. The four designs (each of which is repeated) were created by sculptor Victor Berlendis. At either end of the doors is a single ticket window, also boarded but with a delicate foliated surround carved in low relief.

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

The dominant feature of the main block is the two-story recessed portico of eight Corinthian order columns. Behind the column screen, the peristyle is accessible from the second floor interior lobby. Against the building wall, a set of flat pilasters with stylized Art Deco capitals echoes the colonnade. Boarded doors between the pilasters are separated from windows at the third story by spandrels representing caducei and winged lyres in shallow relief. Above the upper windows are similar panels with symbols of knowledge and wisdom.

To either side of the balcony, the center unit of the facade is defined by slightly projecting end blocks rising the full height of the facade (Detail, Photo 3). At the second and third stories at each block is a two-story panel with an inscribed quotation:

Democratic government will be the more successful the more the public opinion ruling it is enlightened and inspired by full discussion . . . the greatest danger threatening democratic institutions comes from those influences which tend to stifle or demoralize discussion.

Carl Schurz (east panel)

Simple means should be found by which, by an interchange of points of view, we may get together. For the whole process of modern life is a process by which we must exclude misunderstandings, bring all men into common counsel, and so discover what is the common interest.

Woodrow Wilson (west panel)

A frieze with roundels over the columns separates the top story. At either end block is a recessed panel with a sculpted relief depicted seated nudes involved in civic discussion. Across the center is carved:

**MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM AND COMMUNITY CENTER BUILDING
ERECTED BY THE PEOPLE OF ST. LOUIS MCMXXXII
A TEMPLE ON WHOSE ALTAR IS EVER GLOWING THE FLAME AT
WHICH PATRIOTISM MAY BE REKINDLED
FREDERICK W. LEHMANN**

The upper section terminates without a cornice.

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Kiel Opera House
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Set back from the facade at the center section only, the outer wall of the theater space rises up as an important element of the composition. Alternating roundels and winged lyres are set beneath a course of squared flowers and an anthemion band.

The two wings at either side of the facade are nearly identical: four bays wide, three stories high, with a blank attic space. The first stories each have two sets of boarded double doors with a window to either side. As at the main block, a mask panel hovers above each set of doors. The lower story windows have decorative iron grills, good examples of Art Deco ironwork. The upper stories have paired casement windows at each bay; at the second story they're topped by louvered vents, while the third story windows are crowned by Art Deco relief panels. The blank wall above the windows is relieved by a dentil course which continues from the center block and a cornice course above. The west side retains its neon sign advertising "Assembly Halls 2 - 4." Most of the original light fixtures, half cylinders with Art Deco finials, remain.

At the west side of the building (Photo 4), the first three bays indicate the location of the lobby and services. Beyond them, the next five bays are set back and defined by double sets of paired casement windows, connected vertically at the second and third floors in common recesses with blank spandrels. Paired windows at the first story are boarded. About two bays from the front of the building, a wide granite staircase starts down to a large entry well, heralded by a projecting neon sign for the "Exposition Hall." A decorative but non-historic iron gate closes off access to the stairs. In the three center bays in the basement level, paired wide door openings (boarded) are topped by copper light fixtures.

In the southern bay of this section is the stage entrance. Granite steps lead up to a granite loading dock and iron doors. A wide corrugated metal loading door is above at the second story level.

The vertical divisions change when the building steps back toward the street for the next four bays. Four boarded windows define the bays at the first floor; above that at each bay are sets of four stacked casement pairs in a continuous vertical frame. The top pair is set off by a stone spandrel panel, while the lower three are separated by metal. This division marks the location of the stage, the connecting section between the Opera House and the demolished convention hall. The stage's flyspace juts out above the roofline here in a gabled section.

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Kiel Opera House
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The next section to the south is part of the added arena. The new Kiel Center and its attached parking garage are clearly differentiated from the historic building in style, scale and materials, with one exception in the east transition area (noted below). The connection at the west side includes two stories of large horizontal louvered vents set in concrete panels above a row of metal double doors. To the south, the concrete-paneled walls of the arena curve away to the west and disappear behind the parking garage. The parking garage, which is not structurally attached to the building and is not included in the nominated parcel, is a roughly rectangular structure with open concrete decks. For most of its length it is separated from the arena's exterior wall by a gap of 5-6 inches.

The arena emerges from behind the garage at the south, the transition eased by a multi-level glass walkway (Photo 5). The walkway is structurally integrated into the garage; it is attached to the arena at the floors, ceilings and the south wall. The 5-6" gap is visible at the north end of the walkway.

Beyond the walkway, the arena's curved concrete exterior wall meets a glass wall which tilts out over the sidewalk to define the main entrance and visitor area. The glass wall is not parallel with the sidewalk, but moves closer to the street to the east. It forms an acute angle at the southeast corner of the building as the glass wall returns north. Here it rejoins the curved concrete wall of the arena. On this side the concrete panel wall is opened with a broad set of windows. A curving roof structure is mounted above the arena's side walls, set back slightly.

The east elevation of the original building is very similar to the west, but here the higher street level allows more direct access to the three sets of exposition hall doors via eight steps which run parallel to the street (Photo 6). The entrance is sheltered by a broad iron canopy. Instead of a stage entrance, the east side has an entrance to the former Kiel Club (located in the former cafeteria beneath the Opera House).

The transition between the original building and its addition at the east side is facilitated by a section of the original wall which was removed from the convention hall side at demolition and replaced as facing on the new building. Four bays wide, the double doors at the first story are under another iron awning similar to the one just north. Above, the historic windows have been replaced with the same shiny blue glass used throughout the addition. The stone pilasters between the bays have decorative capitals.

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Interior

At the ground level entrance facing Market Street, the seven entrance doors lead into the lower lobby, or ticket lobby. The ceiling is divided into bays separated by broad ribs which meet marble pilasters at the walls. Indirect lighting is found around the perimeter of the coves in the form of luminous panels of fluted square glass separated by decorative metal panels. Ticket windows, surrounded by the same marble used at the pilasters, are located opposite the entrance doors (Figure 1). Ornamental metal railings decorate the curving stairway at either end of the lower lobby.

These stairs lead to the main lobby, a two-story space stretching across the front of the building (Figures 2-4). Double-height fluted marble piers with flat Corinthian capitals support balconies along the north and south sides; the narrower east and west ends use marble walls with narrow openings at either end leading to the stairs. The plaster ceiling is divided into coffered sections with recessed lighting and decorative plaster. Large cylindrical fixtures hang in each bay; additional light is provided by sconces at the piers and walls, and rounded three-tier fixtures at the lower ceilings. Beyond the columns at the north wall, doors lead onto the balcony at the facade's Corinthian peristyle.

Past the columns which define the south end of the lobby, a main hallway follows the gentle curve of the rear of the theater. Five entrances lead patrons into the main aisles which separate the four sections of seats on the floor. Plastered in gold and white, the theater may be the city's last major Art Deco public space. Seating for approximately 3500 patrons is divided between the floor and single balcony.

The proscenium, 63 feet wide and 49 feet high,¹ is ornamented with multiple courses of simple Art Deco foliage in gold and blue plaster (Figure 5). A circular panel centers the top of the arch, described at the auditorium's opening as "10 feet in diameter, designed by Victor Berlendis, sculptor, to represent the famous statue of St. Louis by Charles Niehaus, which stands

¹"St. Louis Municipal Auditorium and Community Center," *The Architectural Record*, November 1934. 361-365.

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Kiel Opera House
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in front of the City Art Museum in Forest Park.² Side walls of the theater space are simply articulated in two tiers of curtained panels outlined in ornamental plaster work. Each upper panel is centered by a large light fixture; the lower level is lit by wall fixtures between the recessed panels. The upper walls terminate in a plaster frieze with palmettes projecting above the cornice line. A shallow dome centers the plaster ceiling; the outer ring of the of the curved section of the dome is surfaced with acoustic tile (Figures 6-7). With the exception of the acoustic tile, carpet, upholstery, and some of the technology associated with production (such as the stage lights), the theater space is highly intact.

The stage was originally designed to serve both the Opera House and Convention Hall. Steel curtains, designed to be soundproof, weighed 21 tons for the Opera House side and 31 tons on the larger Convention Hall opening (or 25 and 37 tons, respectively, according to another source³). With both curtains raised, the total capacity of Opera House and Auditorium reached 15,600.⁴ At 48 x 145 feet, the stage was said to be the second largest in the United States with the highest rigging.⁵ With the demolition of the Auditorium, the stage gained depth from the former Auditorium orchestra pit. At the rear of the stage, a door through a concrete wall now leads to a storage area in the new Kiel Center addition.

To the east and west of the theater, hallways with intact Art Deco lighting and wall treatments also connect to the four assembly halls (Figure 8). The terrazzo-floored rooms boast a capacity of over 700 when folding chairs are brought in. All four have elevated stages built into the south wall; the two at the upper story have flyspaces overhead. The elaborate coffered plaster ceilings retain original two-tiered disk-like hanging light fixtures in some of the rooms; fluorescent replacements are in others. Acoustic tiles are set into panels on the walls.

²"St. Louis on Parade" daily souvenir programs from the Municipal Auditorium opening celebration, April 14 - 28, 1934. St. Louis: Comfort Printing Company, 1934.

³William E. Hoeflin, "St. Louis' Municipal Auditorium," *Union Electric Magazine*, v. 22 No. 5, May 1934.

⁴"St. Louis Municipal Auditorium and Community Center," 24-25.

⁵"United States' Second Largest Indoor Stage at Kiel Auditorium," *St. Louis Star-Times*, 30 December 1949, and Hoeflin, 4. The largest stage was said to be the Hippodrome in New York.

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Kiel Opera House
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A final major interior space is the Exposition Hall in the lower level. Floor space and utilities were the main attractions of the Exposition Hall for exhibitors. Each of the 457 columns provided both AC and DC power, and most were "equipped with connections for gas, hot and cold water, steam, compressed air and facilities for ventilation to care of the requirements of all classes of industrial or commercial exhibits."⁶ Approximately half of the Exposition Hall, the lower-ceilinged portion under the Opera House, is extant.

Additional extant spaces include the cafeteria, remodeled as the Kiel Club; and a variety of office and dressing room spaces which were not available for inspection at the time of this submission.

The attached Kiel Center arena is separated from the Opera House stage by a non-load bearing wall with a door opening. Behind this wall is a storage and utility area which is built under the seating of the main interior space. The arena itself, designed by Ellerbe Becket (Kansas City), seats approximately 18,000 to 21,000 (depending on the event). Seating is arranged in an oval shape around a flat surface which can be covered with ice or flooring. The event floor is sunk some 18 feet below grade to allow the main level concourse to be at street level. Corridors with concession and other service areas ring the arena on several levels. The main entrance, a multi-story atrium, is at the southeast corner; offices are primarily clustered at the southwest corner.

Alterations

The most significant and obvious alteration to the historic Municipal Auditorium complex is the demolition of the original auditorium and its replacement with a larger arena. Kiel Auditorium accounted for approximately one-half of the footprint of the original building. It contained the largest of the seven public assembly spaces (by volume) in the original building and half of the Exposition Hall, which ran beneath the entire building. The demolished section also contained small meeting rooms for use during conventions.

The Auditorium's replacement, Kiel Center, continues the original use of the demolished section. Its design, however, does not relate in any way to the original building except for the

⁶Hoeflin, 6.

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four-bay transition at the east elevation which uses the original limestone wall of the Auditorium as a veneer over entrances to the arena. Once the patron enters the doors, however, there is absolutely no question that he is in a non-historic addition to the original building.

The portion of the building which remains, slightly over half of the original footprint, retains every aspect of integrity. Because the Opera House was slated for restoration at the time the Auditorium was demolished, no major interior alterations were made. The lobbies, theater, assembly rooms, and hallways retain their original forms, decorative features, and many original fixtures.

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Summary of significance

Kiel Opera House, built between 1932-1934, is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Community Development and Planning and under Criterion A in the area of Performing Arts. The Opera House, or Municipal Auditorium as the complex was originally called, was developed as part of a significant ensemble of civic buildings as an outgrowth of the City Beautiful movement. Its construction was the culmination of thirty years of planning for a public buildings group in downtown St. Louis. In addition, the Opera House is significant as the community's major performing arts center for the first thirty years of its existence. Construction of the Municipal Auditorium sparked a revival of grand opera in St. Louis; it is the only extant performance venue historically associated with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra; and it served as a primary venue for local and national productions of music, dance and other arts for many years. Although the integrity of the building has suffered as a result of the replacement of the convention hall (the largest of the original seven public spaces in the building), the building retains integrity in the proposed areas of significance. In the area of Community Development, the relationship of the building with the Memorial Plaza and the civic buildings to the east is essentially unchanged. For the area of Performing Arts, the Opera House theater, its stage and many service spaces are largely intact. In addition, the Opera House is the only extant theater designed for the major performing arts in St. Louis. It is one of only two theaters of any kind remaining in the Central Business District, which was a primary entertainment district and theatrical center in St. Louis throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century.⁷

The period of significance is 1934-1949, beginning with the building's completion and dedication. Although the building's performing arts activities continued beyond 1949, this 50-year cutoff is used as an arbitrary ending date because exceptional significance is not claimed.

⁷The other remaining theater, the Orpheum (now the American, NR 3/18/1985), was originally a vaudeville house.

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Background

St. Louis' Municipal Auditorium was designed as part of a public buildings group financed by a 1923 bond issue which also included funds for a new Civil Courts building, memorial plaza, and 17 other public works projects. Condemnation of the necessary land was completed early in 1932, and construction began that August. A two-week celebration dedicated the new complex in April, 1934; final construction on the Convention Hall side of the building, made possible with a \$137,000 WPA grant, was not complete until 1936.

In 1943, the complex was renamed in honor of former mayor Henry Kiel. Through the 1980s, Kiel Auditorium and Kiel Opera House, as the two largest spaces became known, were the site of countless conventions, operas, symphony performances, concerts, sports events, festivals, expositions and civic events. The Auditorium side of the building, facing away from the Memorial Plaza, was demolished and replaced in 1994 with a sports arena (see original plan, Figure 9, and Boundary Map for a comparison). The historic building which remains is Kiel Opera House. The new addition, known as Kiel Center, does not contribute to the significance of the building. Kiel Center has a large parking garage structure attached to the west which is also non-contributing.

Community Development and Planning

Kiel Opera House represents the culmination of three generations of plans over three decades calling for a formal public buildings group centering on City Hall (1890). These plans represented the idealism of the City Beautiful movement and reflected an era of optimism and enthusiasm for the improvement of the city.

The foundation for generations of public buildings planners was laid in 1840, when the City of St. Louis purchased six blocks at the intersection of Twelfth and Market Streets for a City Hall. It took another 30 years for the first permanent City Hall to appear on the site at Eleventh Street between Chestnut and Market. The structure was considered a failure almost instantly, and it was not long before another City Hall was envisioned across Twelfth Street on the site of

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Washington Park.⁸ Ground was broken for the new building in 1890. Although the new City Hall was in use by 1898, final interior work and formal dedication did not take place until 1904.

The completion of the new City Hall coincided with a nationwide flowering of scholarship and plans collectively known as the City Beautiful movement. Inspired by such diverse sources as the work of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead and Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exposition, and linked with the progressivism which flourished across America at the beginning of the 20th century, the idealized City Beautiful would offer its proud citizens ennobling public spaces, orderly building groups, and beautiful park systems. Numerous cities (among them Chicago, Cleveland, Seattle, San Francisco and Denver) produced documents to incorporate these ideals into the fabric of the downtowns and neighborhoods that had grown up without orderly planning.

Author William H. Wilson asserts that no fewer than five different publications in 1903-1904 brought the emerging notion of American civic centers into the ideological framework of the City Beautiful movement. He synthesizes the rhetoric of the five influential sources:

The civic center was intended to be a beautiful ensemble, an architectonic triumph far more breathtaking than a single building, no matter how comely, could be. Grouping public buildings around a park, square or intersection of radial streets allowed the visual delights of perspectives, open spaces, and the contrasts between the buildings and their umbrageous settings.⁹

Aesthetics were only part of the rationale for such building groups, though:

Important as beauty was for itself, its role in environmental conditioning was never far from the minds of civic center advocates. The civic center's beauty would reflect in the souls of the city's inhabitants, inducing order, calm, and propriety therein. Second, the citizen's presence in the center, together with other citizens,

⁸Randy V. Seagrist, *CBD West: A Report of Landmarks Association of St. Louis*, 1978. Typescript, Landmarks Association of St. Louis.

⁹William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 92.

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would strengthen pride in the city and awaken a sense of community with fellow urban dwellers.¹⁰

By 1904, as City Hall neared completion, three prominent architects (John Lawrence Mauran, William S. Eames and Albert B. Groves) were brought together as St. Louis' Public Buildings Commission. Their recommendations on how to address the problem of the city's aging stock of civic buildings were almost certainly influenced by that year's Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Many major architects in St. Louis had a hand in this tremendous undertaking, which sought to outdo Chicago's Columbian Exposition of the previous decade. Like Chicago, the St. Louis World's Fair united its distinctive halls and buildings with a common use of classical motifs, the liberal use of sculpture and statuary, and grand plazas and vistas. The Public Buildings Commission's report was chartered at about the same time the Exposition grounds neared completion.

Charged with reporting on the status of the various institutions operated by the City of St. Louis, the commission decried many of the existing facilities and suggested the creation of a buildings group which would accommodate "a Law Library, Executive Building, Police Department Headquarters, Jail Building, Fire Department, Engine House, Morgue and other municipal purposes."¹¹ Two schemes were suggested; both followed the City Beautiful trend by relating proposed new buildings to City Hall with landscaping and architectural symmetry across a street or plaza.

The first scheme used Twelfth Street as an axis, reflecting City Hall in a grouping of three buildings directly east. A second, more ambitious plan would condemn privately owned land to create a grouping extending west and south from City Hall, with a greenway axis extending north to the Public Library. (Although not yet designed, the library was correctly sited at its eventual location between Olive and Locust Streets.) Public building groups in Washington, D. C. and under development in Cleveland were cited as American prototypes, and the plan was illustrated with photographs from London, Paris and Dresden.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹*Report of the Public Buildings Commission* (St. Louis: City of St. Louis, 1904), 10.

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Kiel Opera House
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Although most of the recommendations in the report were not implemented, it nonetheless became an influential model for future planners. While the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition was demonstrating an idealized building grouping at the city limits, the Public Buildings Commission's 1904 report was the first attempt in St. Louis to reshape the existing urban fabric in conformity with City Beautiful ideals.

Sections of the Public Buildings Commission's plan which pertained to the public buildings group downtown were grafted almost in their entirety into the Civic League's City Plan of 1907. This first attempt at large-scale planning in St. Louis deputized citizen commissions (composed of members of this relatively elite club) to review various aspects of St. Louis' infrastructure and make recommendations. The collection of recommendations which made up the 1907 City Plan included City Beautiful-inspired suggestions on park systems, civic centers, and many other aspects of the City's physical development.

The legacy of the Civic League Plan lay more in spurring future planning efforts than in actually producing suggestions that the City would implement. Recommendations for the Public Buildings Group, though never executed, probably influenced the siting of the next wave of civic buildings. In 1908 the City bought the block immediately west of City Hall, recommended in the Public Buildings Commission's report for use as a park or plaza, and located the new Municipal Courts Building there. Completed in 1911, the new building would soon be joined by a jail and Children's Building at the south end of the same site. Fulfilling the functional (if not the aesthetic) purpose of the building group plan, a lesser group of civic buildings, completed in brick, was built to the south and southeast of City Hall in the 1920s.

Meanwhile, in 1911, the St. Louis Municipal Assembly authorized a City Plan Commission to "prepare a comprehensive city plan for the future improvement, as well as for the commercial development of the city."¹² One of its first products (1912-13) was a recommendation for a Central Traffic Parkway to clear blight and create a grand public boulevard comparable to Paris' Champs Elysée.¹³ The proposal to clear a block-wide swath between Market and Chestnut, from

¹²City of St. Louis ordinance 25745, enacted 3/27/1911.

¹³City Plan Commission of St. Louis, *Central Traffic-Parkway: Proposed Amendment to the City Charter*. Reports of the City Plan Commission of St. Louis, July 9, 1912 and January 7, 1913. St. Louis: City Plan Commission, 1913.

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Twelfth Street to approximately Jefferson (11 blocks) would ease congestion, add to the beauty of the civic buildings, and improve the view and surroundings by removing businesses and buildings deemed unpleasing or inappropriate. Although the parkway was never implemented, it laid the groundwork for the same blocks to become part of the Memorial Plaza twenty years later. A vestige of the plan is revived in current proposals to convert Chestnut and Market to a pair of complementary one-way streets linked by the park strip in between.

By 1919, the City Plan Commission (under the direction of Harland Bartholomew, hired as the city's first paid planner in 1916 when such a position was virtually unknown) had produced its own "Public Building Group Plan." This plan abandoned the parkway concept between Market and Chestnut, providing instead for elegantly landscaped park blocks in one version and two park blocks with a building on the western block in a second plan. Two additional park blocks extended north from the central plaza to the Public Library, resulting in a T-shaped open space surrounded by public buildings (Figure 13).

The Plan Commission concluded with this expression of City Beautiful ideals:

In 1904 a Public Buildings Commission was appointed to study the location of public buildings in St. Louis. This commission presented an admirable report, but their suggestions were not followed. . . . Now that other structures are soon to be built we should again give thought to the question of the best design and location for them, so that whatever is done may not be in continuation of preceding haphazard methods of our city's growth. Even though it may take years to complete a public-buildings group plan such as is here suggested, whatever we do now should be done in the spirit of building a future city in accordance with some definite plan that will be truly representative of our city, our citizenship, and enlightened methods of city building.¹⁴

A striking new addition to this plan was the call for a Municipal Auditorium. This updated town hall was a versatile new building form which could be adapted, depending on the needs of the community, as a city hall, theater, offices, or arena. A 1931 publication called "Municipal Auditoriums" described the impetus behind promoting such buildings:

¹⁴City Plan Commission, *A Public Building Group Plan For St. Louis* (St. Louis: Nixon-Jones Printing Co, 1919). 14.

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The physical attractiveness of the city is enhanced by such an addition to its public buildings. Making a town a social and cultural center for the region is good business. Offering a center of community activity is sound civic education. Having fine buildings is good publicity. Thus the auditorium movement has grown. . . . In some cases private enterprise was adequate, but many cities have found that an auditorium suited to their needs was lacking and have taken to themselves the provision of this need.¹⁵

The author asserted that the municipal auditorium trend was still ascendant in 1931: of the 92 cities which provided dates of completion for their auditoriums, only 11 were constructed before 1910; 28 were completed in the 1910s; and 50 were constructed between 1920-1930. These 92 were compiled from a total of 281 identified cities with municipally owned auditorium facilities. In addition, the author noted that at least 15 auditoriums were already part of a public buildings group, and that "Pretentious plans for civic centers" underway in St. Louis, San Francisco, Cleveland, Pasadena, Riverside, Camden, Kalamazoo and Lakeland, included an auditorium.¹⁶

Without funding, it seems, none of St. Louis' idealized plaza and building schemes would be able to get off the ground. In 1923, St. Louis voters passed the largest bond issue in the nation to that date. Twenty of twenty-one individual projects were approved by the required two-thirds majority, enabling a total of about \$87.4 million in public expenditure. The highest-ticket items were for infrastructure improvements, including over \$30 million for drainage, sewers and water works, \$8.65 million for street widenings, and \$8 million for street lights. Components of a Memorial Plaza and Public Buildings group were endorsed by an enthusiastic citizenry. The Memorial Plaza was awarded \$6 million, the Municipal Auditorium \$5 million, and a new Civil

¹⁵Trull, Edna. *Municipal Auditoriums*. Municipal Administration Service publication number 21 (New York City: Municipal Administration Service, 1931), 1.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 29.

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Courts Building \$4 million.¹⁷ At last, both the framework and funds would be available to plan a public buildings group on a grand scale.

In 1925, a Plaza Commission was formed to implement the Memorial Plaza items on the bond issue. Member firms were selected in a secret vote of the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects. The selected firms were to agree that the plaza design would be provided to the City at no charge, but the regular rate would be charged for the building plans.¹⁸ The *Architectural Record* described how this unique collaboration produced the Municipal Auditorium:

... ordinances were introduced and a Plaza Commission, composed of eight architects and two engineers, was created to design all features connected with the Plaza, including the buildings. The Plaza Commission, instead of establishing a general office, divided itself in groups to study the different elements involved. As a result of these subdivisions, the studies prepared by LaBeaume and Klein were approved by the commission and the design of this building allocated to this office. An elaborate program, specifying the uses of the building, had previously been prepared in consultation with city officials and all of the local groups interested in its use.¹⁹

The bond ordinance itself dictated general shape of the public buildings group. Threats to the fulfillment of the Memorial Plaza were encountered, most seriously in the form of a 1924 ballot proposition to place the new civil courthouse farther downtown. A well-organized opposition published preliminary drawings of the Plaza, and the measure was defeated. The east-west axis would now be focal, terminating in a new Civil Courts skyscraper to the east. The Municipal Auditorium would be located west of the Municipal Courts, as suggested in the 1919

¹⁷*Special election of February 9, 1923* - undated manuscript, St. Louis Public Library. The lower figure for the Civil Courts Building reflects the fact that the City already owned the land, which included the site of the 1872 City Hall.

¹⁸"Architects of St. Louis Choose Designers for Plaza by Secret Vote," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 7, 1924.

¹⁹"St. Louis Municipal Auditorium," 362.

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City Plan Commission proposal. The ordinance itself specified ten city blocks which would be condemned and cleared for the Memorial Plaza (including two blocks for the Auditorium).²⁰

By 1928, the Commission's plan included renderings of the plaza's three new buildings in essentially their final form (Figure 10).²¹ Designed by Commission member firm LaBeaume & Klein, the new Municipal Auditorium and Community Center was begun in August 1932 and dedicated in 1934. By that time, most of the elements envisioned in the Plaza Commission's plan had been executed. The placement of the Civil Courts Building at the east end of the Plaza and the wall of civic buildings along the south side of Market are successful elements of the original design, as are the War Memorial and the park which separates it from the Public Library. Other elements (an extensive water feature with a fountain head at the west end of the plaza and a fountain at the east end; underground parking; projected buildings to either side of the War Memorial) were never funded.²²

Over time, the plan to dignify Market Street with public buildings was carried even further with the construction of the WPA Post Office (1937), its addition, and a new Federal Building (1962), completing the promenade of civic buildings from the Federal Courts to Union Station. The Memorial Plaza became a favored location for a variety of public sculpture. Additional memorials honoring American veterans of later wars were added in the block south of the World War I memorial.

The significant ensemble formed by Kiel Opera House, the Civil Courts building, War Memorial, City Hall, Municipal Courts, Federal Courthouse, Public Library, and park blocks is the legacy of generations of planners' efforts to give St. Louis a public plaza and civic building group which would compare to any in the world. The public buildings group became, as planners

²⁰ While an ordinance directing the issuance of bonds was passed in May 1923, there was no action to begin condemning the necessary land for the Plaza and its buildings until the following July (ordinance 33252). The City purchased its first parcel on the two blocks dedicated to the auditorium in 1927; acquisition was not complete until February of 1932. The total cost of the site was over a million dollars for 25 separate land purchases. *Memorial Plaza Bond Issue, Acquisitions, Costs, Ordinances - 1922 - 1932*, compiled by Lucius H. Cannon. St. Louis: Municipal Reference Library, 1933. St. Louis Public Library Special Collections.

²¹ extensive drawings were published in "The Civic Improvement of St. Louis," *The American Architect*, June 5, 1928. 725-731.

²² Harland Bartholomew, "The Next Fifty Years," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 9, 1928.

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hoped, a focus for additional public art and memorials. Kiel Opera House's dramatic presence on Market Street represents a City Beautiful dream fulfilled, a civic center for the people of St. Louis.

Performing Arts

Under Criterion A, Kiel Opera House is significant in the area of Performing Arts. Although the uses of the Auditorium complex were varied and many, the Municipal Auditorium became at its opening the undisputed center of performing arts in St. Louis. It remained so through the period of significance.

When St. Louis voters went to the polls in 1923, they directed the issuance of bonds for a:

'Municipal Auditorium and Community Center' to be used for the holding of public meetings, gatherings, and conventions, for the discussion of public questions, including matters submitted to the people under the referendum or the initiative, and to provide suitable meeting places for educational, moral, musical, industrial, labor and other purposes.²³

Although many public questions were indeed discussed at Kiel over the years, the Municipal Auditorium was known primarily as a center for sports, concerts, conventions and the performing arts. The Opera House itself hosted numerous operas, annual folk festivals, plays, and concerts. As the home of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra from 1934-1968, it is the only extant building associated with that institution's first eighty years. The performing arts events held at Kiel Opera House made a significant cultural contribution to the St. Louis community in the period of significance, 1934-1949.

In its first year of operation, the Opera House became home of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. Founded in 1880, the Symphony still exists and is considered the second oldest in the nation. Its former home, the Odeon, had a seating capacity of only 2,000; in the heyday of the

²³City of St. Louis Ordinance 32019, Proposition 13. City of St. Louis.

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symphony this was not enough for large concerts with celebrity soloists. The new hall suited these larger performances admirably, although for everyday concerts the capacity often exceeded demand. Author Richard Mueller notes that the Opera House was larger than Carnegie Hall and the symphony halls in Boston, Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago and New York.²⁴

Kiel Opera House remained the home of the St. Louis Symphony during its period of greatest growth and its first rise to national fame. The maturation of the Symphony during these years can be credited to conductor and musical director Vladimir Golschmann. A former conductor for the Ballet Russe and the Scottish Orchestra, Golschmann was only 37 when, after serving as guest conductor in the previous season, he was asked to serve as full-time director in 1931-32.

Through the 1940s, the Symphony toured America. Its evolution under Golschmann was evident to the critics; in 1938 Chicago's Herman DeVries wrote:

The St. Louisans, in their annual visit to Chicago, have never failed to impress us as a body of fine players but at yesterday's concert it became evident that a complete change had taken place, so marked as to call forth the highest encomiums for an orchestra that now ranks with the finest in the world.²⁵

The apex was perhaps its 1950 visit to Carnegie Hall, after which noted critic Virgil Thomson referred to the Orchestra as one of the finest in the country. Its reputation at home, too, grew during the 1940s, augmented by the regular visits of famed soloists and guest conductors. The symphony made regular radio broadcasts on NBC in the 1934-35 season and took part in a 1951 celebration of Human Rights Day, broadcast on radio nationally from Kiel, with celebrities such as Rex Harrison and Jose Ferrer.

For 33 seasons, the Symphony Society regularly leased Kiel Opera House, taking advantage of the Convention Hall side of the building for the occasional free concert and the annual pension fund concert. The tenure was not without complaints. Early acoustical problems were partially solved by an additional shell on the stage designed in 1936. Parking had become a

²⁴Richard E. Mueller, *A Century of the Symphony* (St. Louis: Knight Publishing, 1979) 186.

²⁵Herman DeVries, *Chicago American* 2/14/38, quoted in Mueller (47).

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problem by the 1960s. Most notably, author Katherine Gladney Wells writes that the massive stage curtains separating the Convention Hall from the Opera House were not as effective as the designers had intended:

That this partition was not totally soundproof became painfully evident whenever a symphony concert coincided with, say, a basketball game. Orchestra members had considerable difficulty hearing one another through the muffled din behind them. Occasionally, the sounds of the athletic contest rose above the sounds of the Orchestra, even to the ears of the audience.²⁶

By the mid-1960s there was a growing sentiment that the Symphony needed a permanent home of its own. Among those who believed so was former Board president Oscar Johnson, who added to the urgency of the quest by donating \$500,000 for the purchase of a new hall - with the proviso that it had to be spent before the end of 1966. Due to a scheduling conflict in the 1965-66 season, the Symphony played one of its concerts in the St. Louis Theatre, a former vaudeville and movie house on Grand Avenue. In 1966, the Symphony Society purchased the smaller St. Louis and embarked on its restoration as Powell Symphony Hall. Kiel Opera House is now the only extant building associated with the first eighty years of the Saint Louis Symphony's Orchestra's existence.

Kiel Opera House also made a significant cultural contribution to the life of the city as its primary venue for grand opera in the decade before World War II. St. Louis "had a substantial operatic history," according to *Opera in America*, dating to 1837. This first attempt is said to have been a musical anthology of sorts performed without the benefit of professional singers at Ludlow & Smith's theater.²⁷ Throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, touring companies presented opera of various quality at a variety of St. Louis venues including the Olympia, the Odeon, and a number of smaller theaters. According to author William G. B.

²⁶Katherine Gladney Wells and Gayle R. McIntosh, *Symphony and Song: The Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra* (Tucson Arizona: The Patrice Press, 1993) (updated ed.). 67

²⁷William G. B. Carson, *St. Louis Goes to the Opera, 1837 - 1941* (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society, 1946). also John Dizikes, *Opera in America: A Cultural History* (Yale University Press, 1993).

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Carson, the premiere venue for grand opera was the Exposition Building's fine, large Music Hall.²⁸ The building was razed in 1907 to make way for the new Public Library. Shortly thereafter, private interests built the Coliseum, which served as a primary location for conventions and expositions until the new Municipal Auditorium was constructed.²⁹

Carson continues:

The evening of April 21, 1934, saw for St. Louis music-lovers the realization of a dream. . . . the city had at last built a Municipal AuditoriumAt last the emptiness left by the demolition of the Exposition Building had been filled. On April 21, then the Auditorium was dedicated with a lavish production of *Aida* in the Opera House This occasion inaugurated a great revival of grand opera in St. Louis. This opening *Aida* marked the beginning of a long series of productions which continued, somewhat spasmodically, it is true, until the War put an end to all such activity in the city.³⁰

The new St. Louis Grand Opera Company brought national stars to perform opera in St. Louis throughout the 1930s. Led by impresario Guy Golterman, who had brought the Metropolitan, Boston, Chicago and San Carlo opera companies to St. Louis in the 1910s, the Municipal Auditorium rang with music. The largest productions were staged on the Convention Hall side, but most of the productions took place in the Opera House (Figure 11).³¹ The operas were generally popular and critical hits, but not always financial successes. Competition with the World Series and National Horse Show was given as a reason for the \$10,000 deficit in the Fall 1934 season; two years later, three Opera House productions had to be canceled at the last minute

²⁸Carson.

²⁹In Chicago Association of Commerce, *The Town Hall of the Nation: Why Chicago must Have a Municipal Auditorium*, Chicago: The Chicago Association of Commerce, 1914: "St. Louis has a convention hall, centrally located, called the Coliseum. It is controlled by a stock company. The seating capacity is between 10,000 and 12,000. Convention charges are not high. The floor space is given as 70,000 square feet." (19)

³⁰*Ibid.*, 43. Other operas during the two-week opening celebration included *Il Trovatore* and *Madame Butterfly*.

³¹According to Carson, 16 out of the first 21 productions were held in the Opera House (43).

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due to the unusual October heat.³² Despite such setbacks, the new company and its building won praise from around the country. An example published in the Fall 1934 program:

"We of the Chicago Grand Opera Company extend our congratulations to the supporters of opera and to Guy Golterman in our sister city of St. Louis upon the accomplishment of their planning to create a great opera company measuring up to their wonderful new opera house."

-George Woodruff
Chairman, executive board
Chicago Grand Opera Company³³

While symphony and opera performances were the most regular events, the Opera House hosted many other major performing arts events in St. Louis. At its dedication, in addition to the opera programs held during the two-week celebration, a Festival of Nations presented by the International Institute and "Forward," a "pageant of Negro progress in St. Louis," took the stage.³⁴ The first annual National Folk Festival was held in the Opera House at the end of April; the 13th and 14th National Folk Festivals returned in 1947-48. Among the many programs during the four-day events were presentations from many American folk traditions (including Ozark, African American, and Native American) as well as international dance and music.³⁵

While the convention hall nearly shut down at the onset of World War II, the Opera House continued to host numerous concerts, rehearsals and other programs. In the 1942-43 season, the Opera House reported 272 events, more than any other unit of Kiel except the lower-level Exposition Hall (which was probably reporting daily Service Men's Center activities in its

³² According to the 1935-36 annual report, the air cooling system was complete (but apparently imperfect) by spring 1936. "Saint Louis Opera Company Financial Statement: Financial statement of twenty one operatic productions and two concerts given by the Opera Company from April 21, 1934 to December 1, 1937. H. P. Smith, Auditor." Private collection of Ed Golterman, St. Louis, Missouri.

³³ "St. Louis Grand Opera" program, Fall 1934. Collection of Ed Golterman, St. Louis, Missouri.

³⁴ "St. Louis on Parade"; "Festival of Nations" souvenir program, April 1934, St. Louis Public Library.

³⁵ "13th Annual National Folk Festival" (May 1947) and "14th Annual National Folk Festival" (April 1948) programs, bound together at the St. Louis Public Library.

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total of 424 events). After the close of the period of significance, rock concerts and touring stage shows joined the regular roster of Kiel happenings.

Both the Opera House and Auditorium were shut down in 1991 as part of a plan to build a new hockey arena on the site of Kiel Auditorium and renovate the Opera House. Kiel Center Partners contracted with the City to lease the entire facility and oversee the construction. In 1994, as the St. Louis Blues hockey team was inaugurating the new Kiel Center, renovation ceased at the opera house. The Kiel partners maintained through 1995 that the renovation would proceed, but in 1996 stated that the \$2.5 million already spent satisfied their obligations.³⁶ At the present time, the original section of Kiel Opera House (including the Opera House and four smaller auditoriums) is vacant and unutilized. The addition, the new Kiel Center, is regularly used for hockey and basketball games and other events. In September 1999, Bill and Nancy Laurie announced that they would purchase both the Blues hockey team and the Kiel lease; as this nomination is written the new owners have not yet expressed their intentions with regard to the Opera House.

The significance of the Opera House is increased by the rarity of its type in St. Louis. The Opera House is now the only extant historic theater building in St. Louis which was designed for the major performing arts. Kiel and the outdoor Municipal Theatre in Forest Park (which was inaugurated with an enormous Guy Golterman production of *Aida* in 1918) are the only two remaining sites in St. Louis associated with grand opera before World War II. The other major performance venues of the early 20th century have been razed, among them the Odeon, Exposition Building and the Olympia. Other extant theaters, including the Fox, Powell Symphony Hall (the St. Louis Theatre), and the American, were designed as movie or vaudeville houses.

³⁶"String-Along Song," *The Riverfront Times* (St. Louis), May 27-June 2, 1998. 24-35.

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Integrity

Integrity is the ability of a property to convey its significance.³⁷ According to the National Register, a property must retain "the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity. The essential physical features are those features that both define *why* a property is significant and *when* it was significant."³⁸

Community Planning

In the area of *Community Planning*, the essential physical features are those which convey the vision of the Opera House as part of a planned public buildings group. The original Municipal Auditorium proposal was framed by its designers in terms of the building's relationship with Market Street, the other public buildings along Market Street, and the proposed parks and plazas which appeared opposite it in various plans. The essential physical features in this area of significance are those which relate the building to the rest of the ensemble. This includes the Market Street facade and the side elevations which are visible from the Memorial Plaza. These elements of the original building are almost completely intact; therefore, the Opera House retains integrity in the area of *Community Planning*.

Performing Arts

In the area of *Performing Arts*, the essential physical features that convey the building's significance remain in a state of almost perfect preservation. The theater itself has undergone no major alterations since the building opened in 1934, retaining its original layout, ornamentation, and stage. In addition, secondary spaces associated with performing arts uses (ticket lobby, Grand Lobby, circulation areas) are highly intact. The Opera House fully conveys the historic association with the development of the performing arts in St. Louis.

³⁷National Register of Historic Places, "National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation," rev. 1995, p. 44.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 46.

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Other Considerations

While the impact of the Convention Hall's demolition should not be underestimated, it is important to note that the demolished section's exterior was always considered subordinate to the Opera House side. Contemporary sources consistently refer to the Market Street elevation as the front of the building; in addition to having the grandest architectural scheme and most prominent location, it was the only part of the building with formal entrances and lobbies. The Convention Hall side, in contrast, was less articulated and ornamented both inside and out.

In addition, the size of the demolished section is not proportional to the relative significance of the activities within. While almost half of the building may have been demolished, only one and a half of the seven public spaces were impacted. The proposed areas of significance specifically relate to the extant historic fabric of the Opera House and its intact interior spaces.

The addition of the new Kiel Center arena in the place of the Convention Hall is a detraction from the building's integrity. However, despite its large size, the addition is clearly modern and easily differentiated from the historic Opera House. It may overshadow the Opera House in plan, but the addition's siting and design have resulted in minimal impact on most views and all interiors of the Opera House. It therefore has minimal impact on the Opera House's ability to convey its historic significance.

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

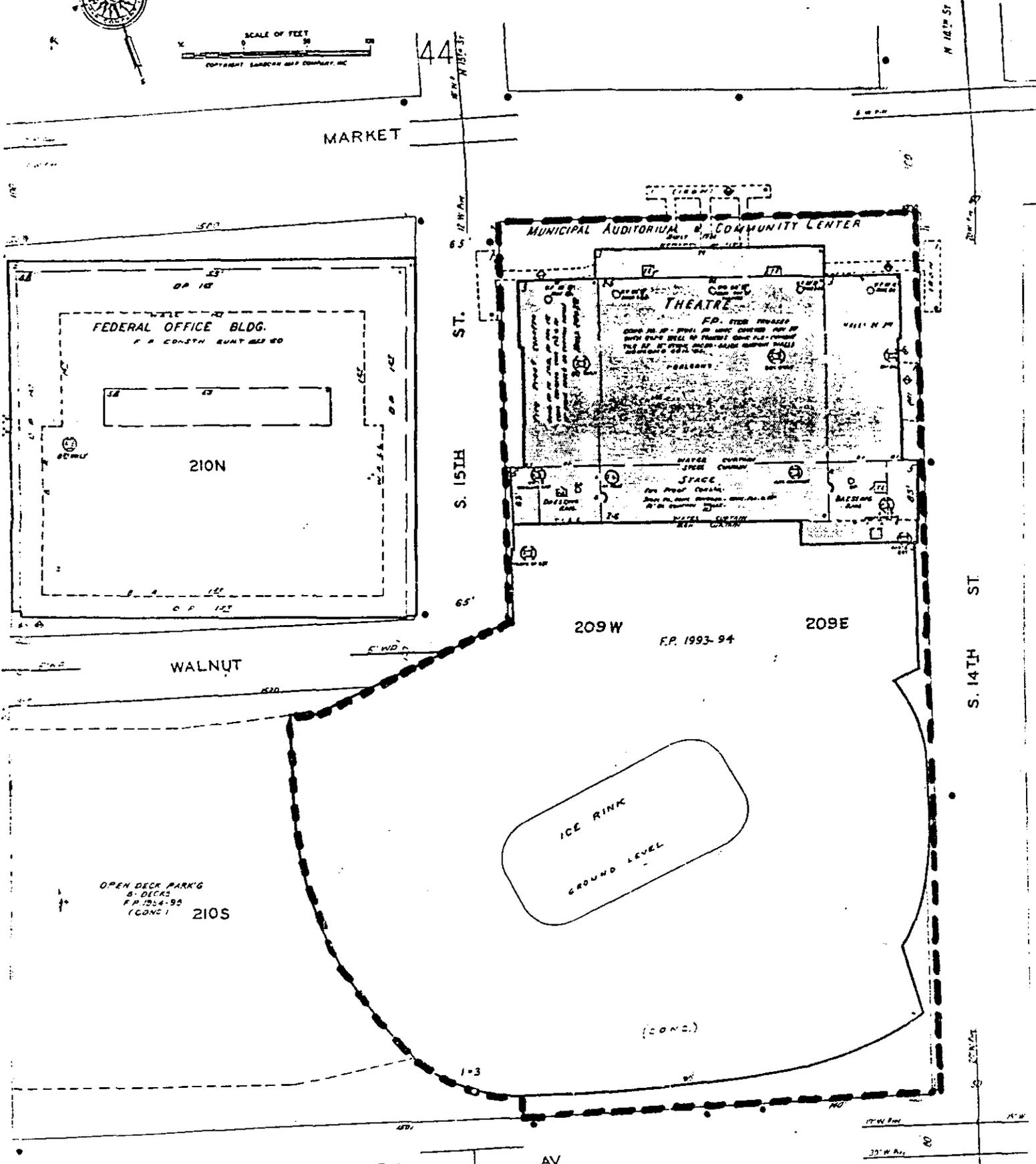
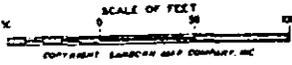
Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries are indicated on the accompanying map entitled "Kiel Opera House Boundary Map." The nominated parcel includes all of city blocks 209E and 209W and that portion of block 210S which coincides with the footprint of the Kiel Center building. The property is located in the City of St. Louis, Missouri. Public streets bound most of the site, specifically Market to the north, S. 14th to the east, Clark to the south, and S. 15th to the west.

Boundary Justification

City Blocks 209E and 209W are historically associated with the nominated building. Where the new addition to the building falls outside of these two blocks, the addition's footprint is used as the boundary. It is necessary to use the footprint as a boundary here because the nominated building is separated from the structure to the west by only a five to six inch gap, and is actually connected at the southern end of the property.

Kiel Opera House Boundary Map
 Kiel Opera House
 St. Louis (Independent City), MO
 Source: Sanborn Map Company



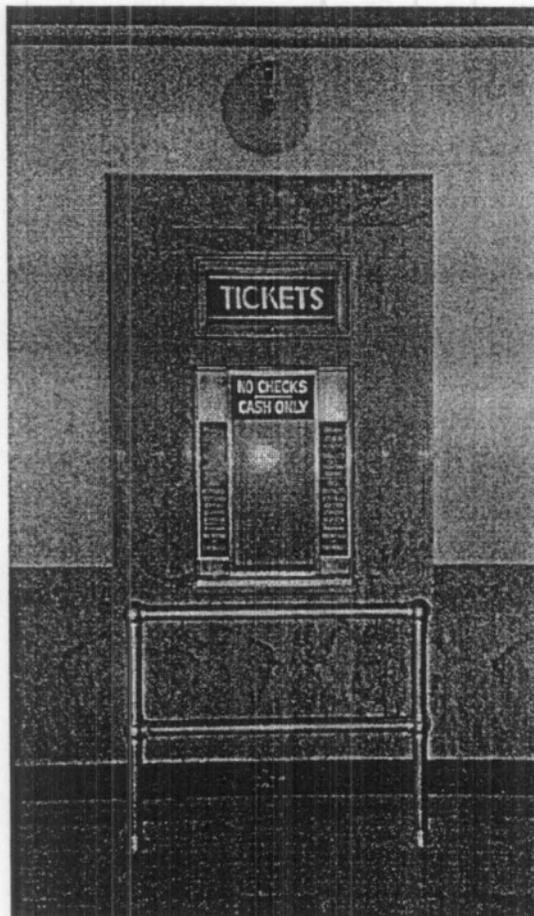
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 1
Window in ticket lobby
camera facing south
Photo by Joseph Dubuque, 1999.
Negative: Joseph Dubuque, St. Louis.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 4
Lobby.
Photo by Joseph Dubuque, 1999.
Negative: Joseph Dubuque, St. Louis.

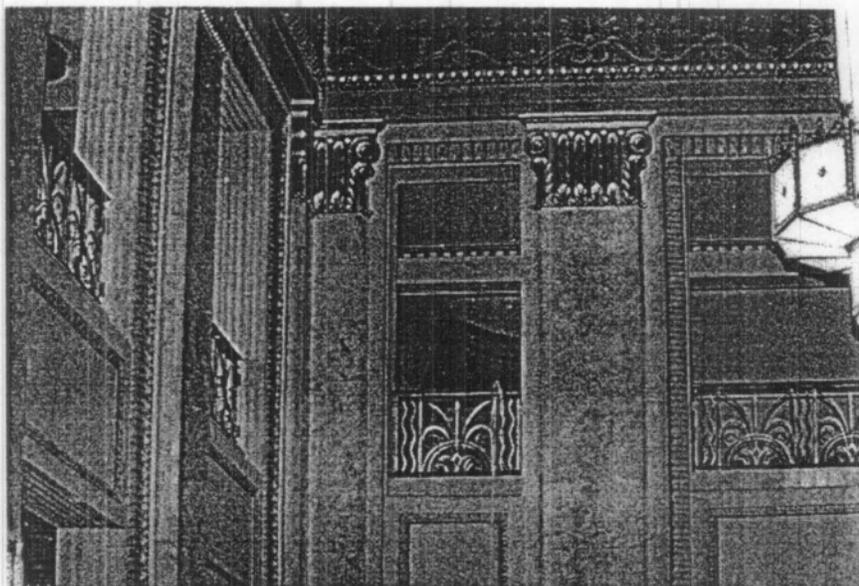
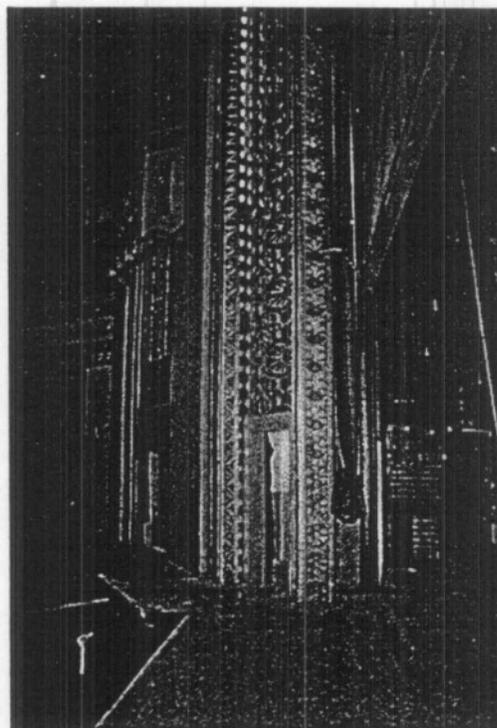


Figure 5
Proscenium Arch from stage
camera facing east
Photo by Joseph Dubuque, 1999.
Negative: Joseph Dubuque, St. Louis.



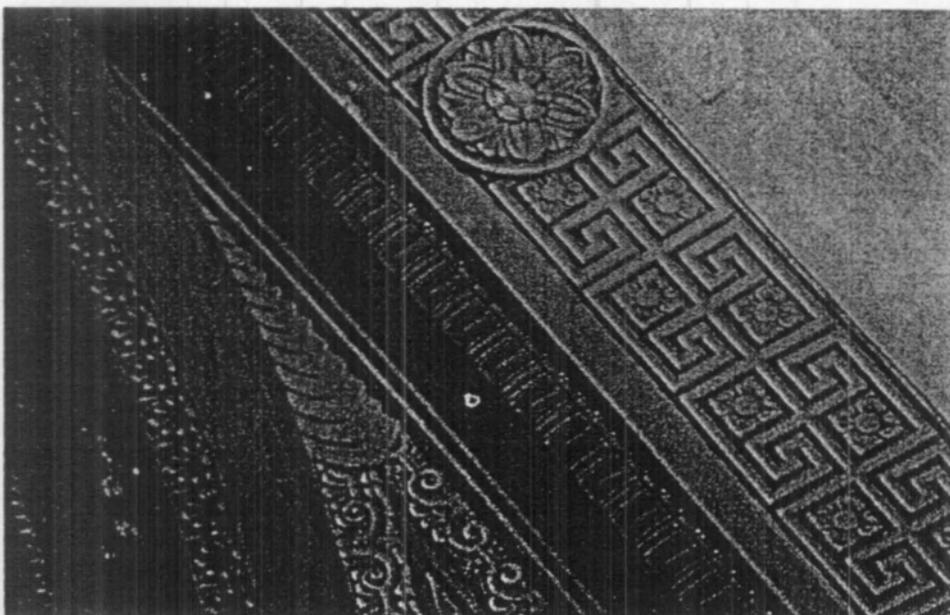
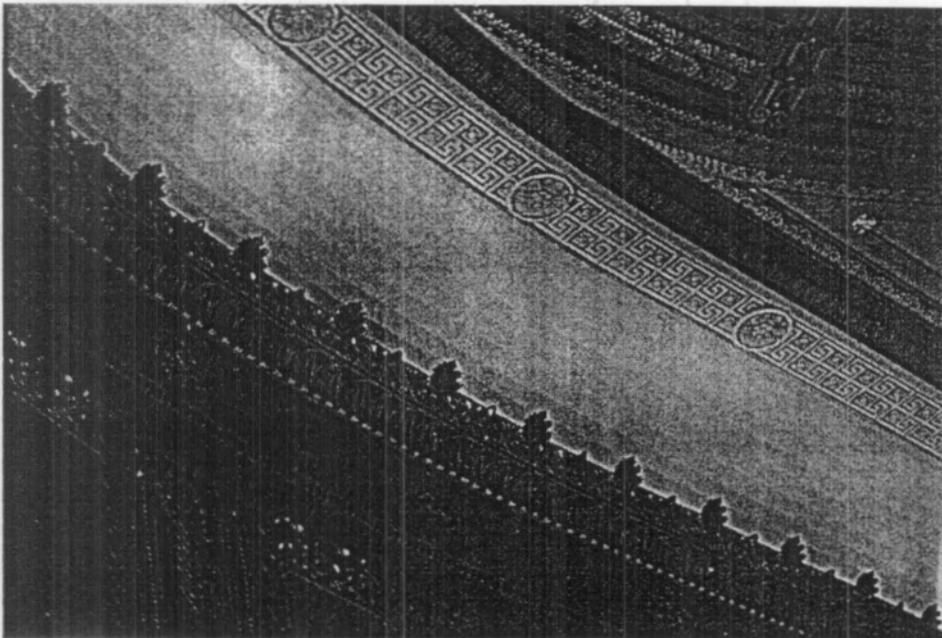
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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figures 6-7
Details of theater ceiling.
Photos by Joseph Dubuque, 1999.
Negative: Joseph Dubuque, St. Louis.



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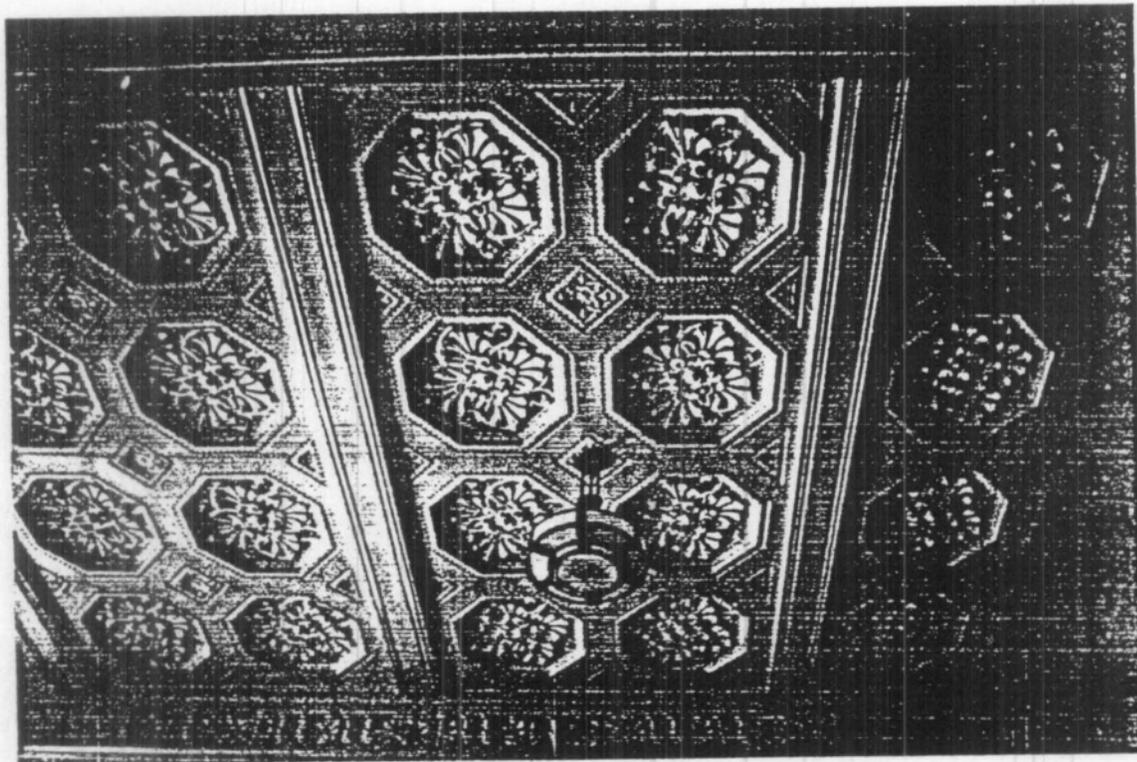
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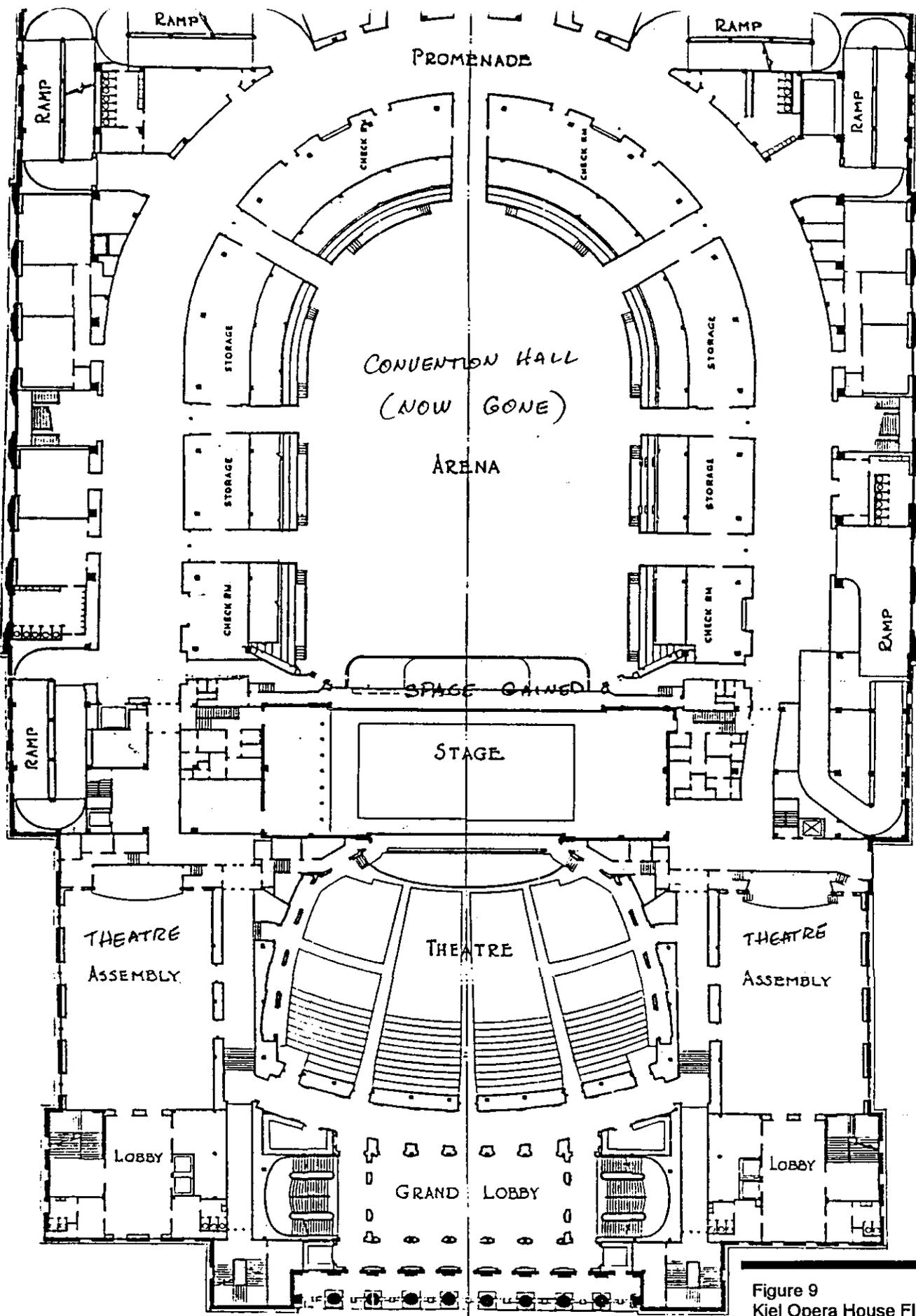
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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 8

Coffered ceiling of one of the Assembly Rooms.
Photo by Joseph Dubuque, 1999
Negative: Joseph Dubuque





MAIN FLOOR PLAN

Figure 9
 Kiel Opera House Floor Plan
 Source: Promotional Brochure c.1934

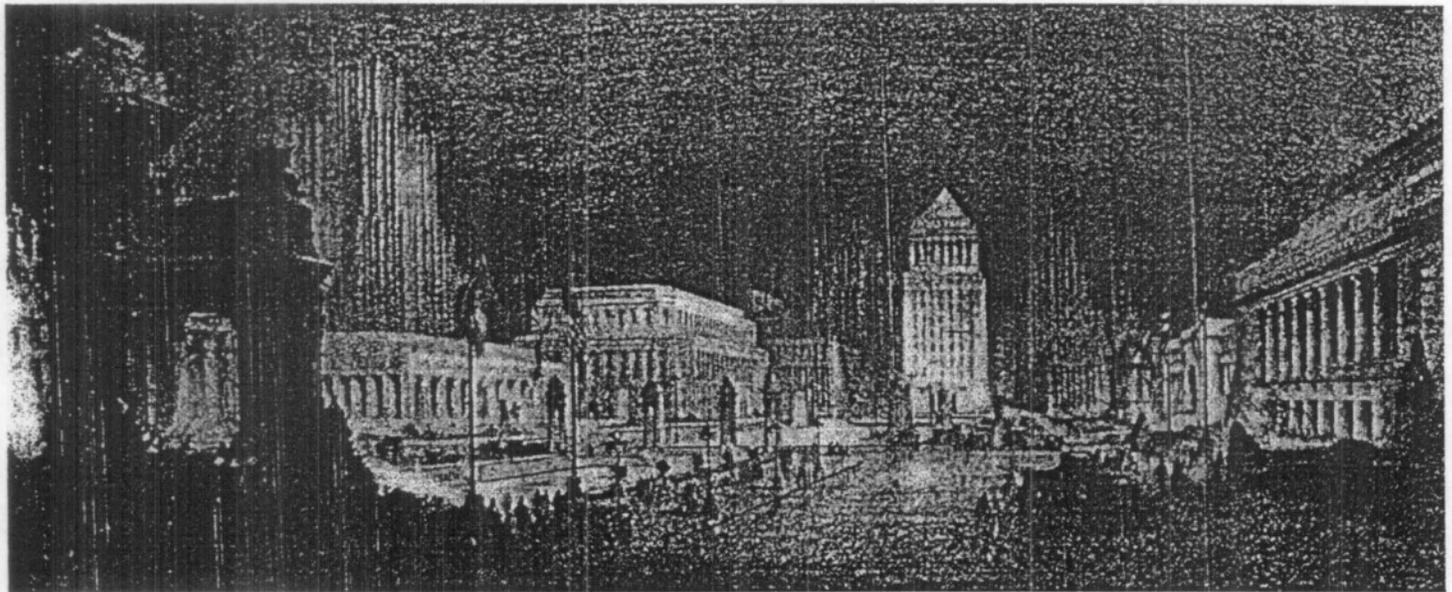
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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 10
Hugh Ferriss
Rendering of Memorial Plaza proposal
published in *American Architect*, June 1928
Kiel Opera House is at far right. Fountainhead (unbuilt) at far left.



Fountainhead (unbuilt)

War memorial

Unidentified
building
(never built)

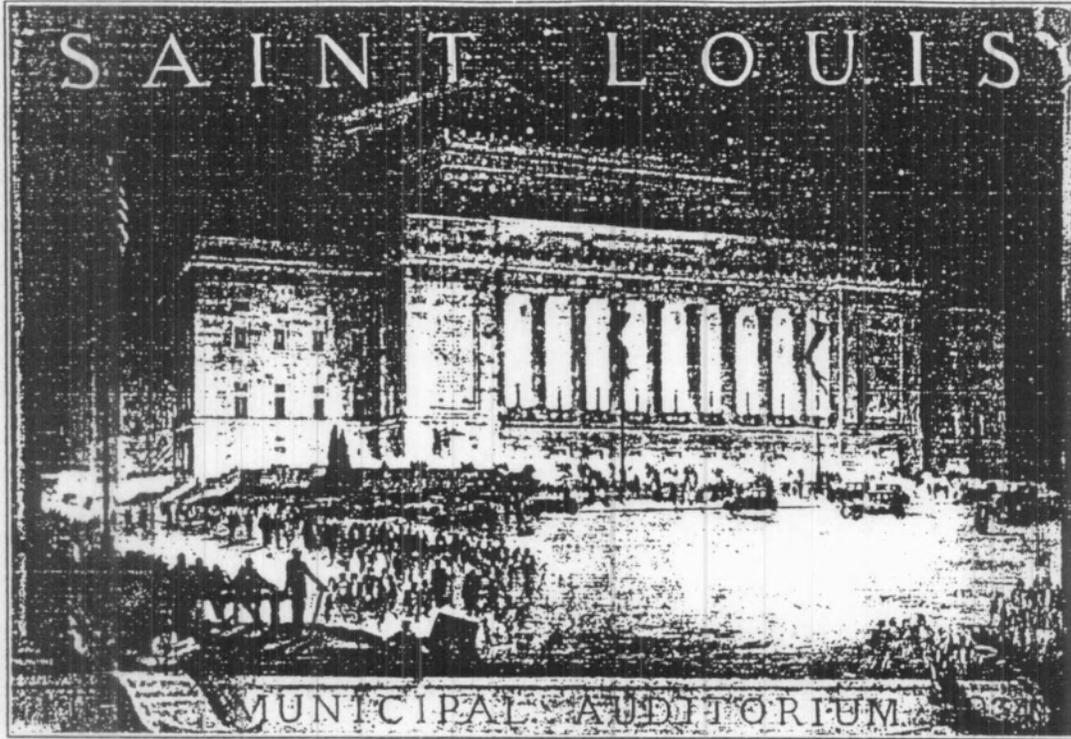
Civil Courts

City
Hall

Mun.
Courts

Kiel
Opera
House

7-11-34



FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAWING BY HUGH FERRIS

SAINT LOUIS GRAND OPERA COMPANY

INCORPORATED

MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM OPERA HOUSE

GUY GOLTERMAN

DIRECTOR

IGAN PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY, OF SAINT LOUIS

Figure 11
 St. Louis Grand Opera Co. program
 Fall 1934
 Kiel Opera House
 St. Louis (Independent City), MO

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

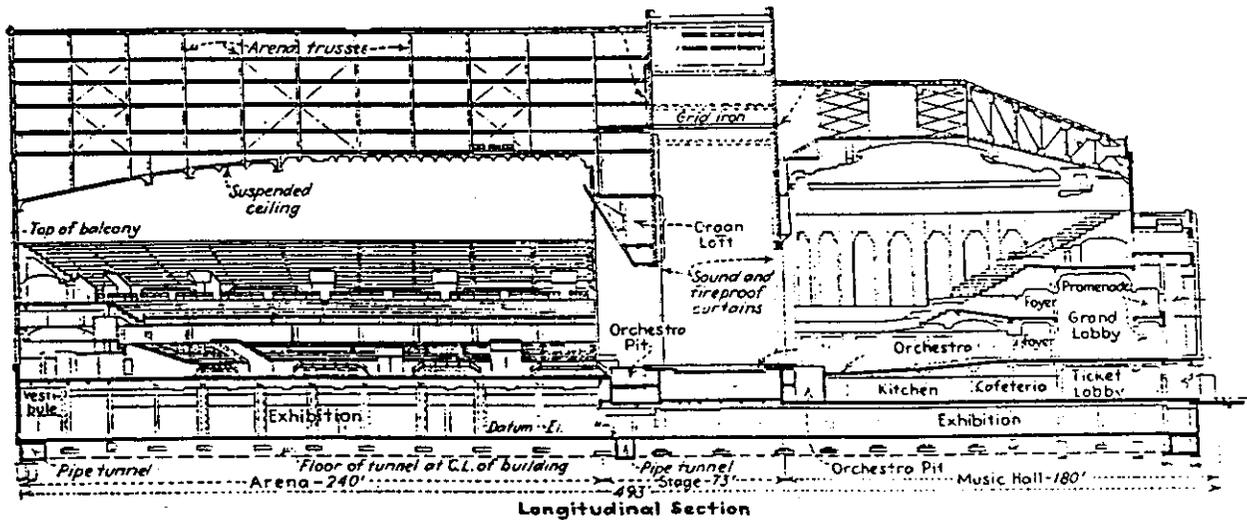
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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

Figure 12

"Longitudinal Section," Kiel Opera House before Auditorium was removed. Source: Municipal Auditorium promotional brochure, c. 1934, St. Louis Public Library.

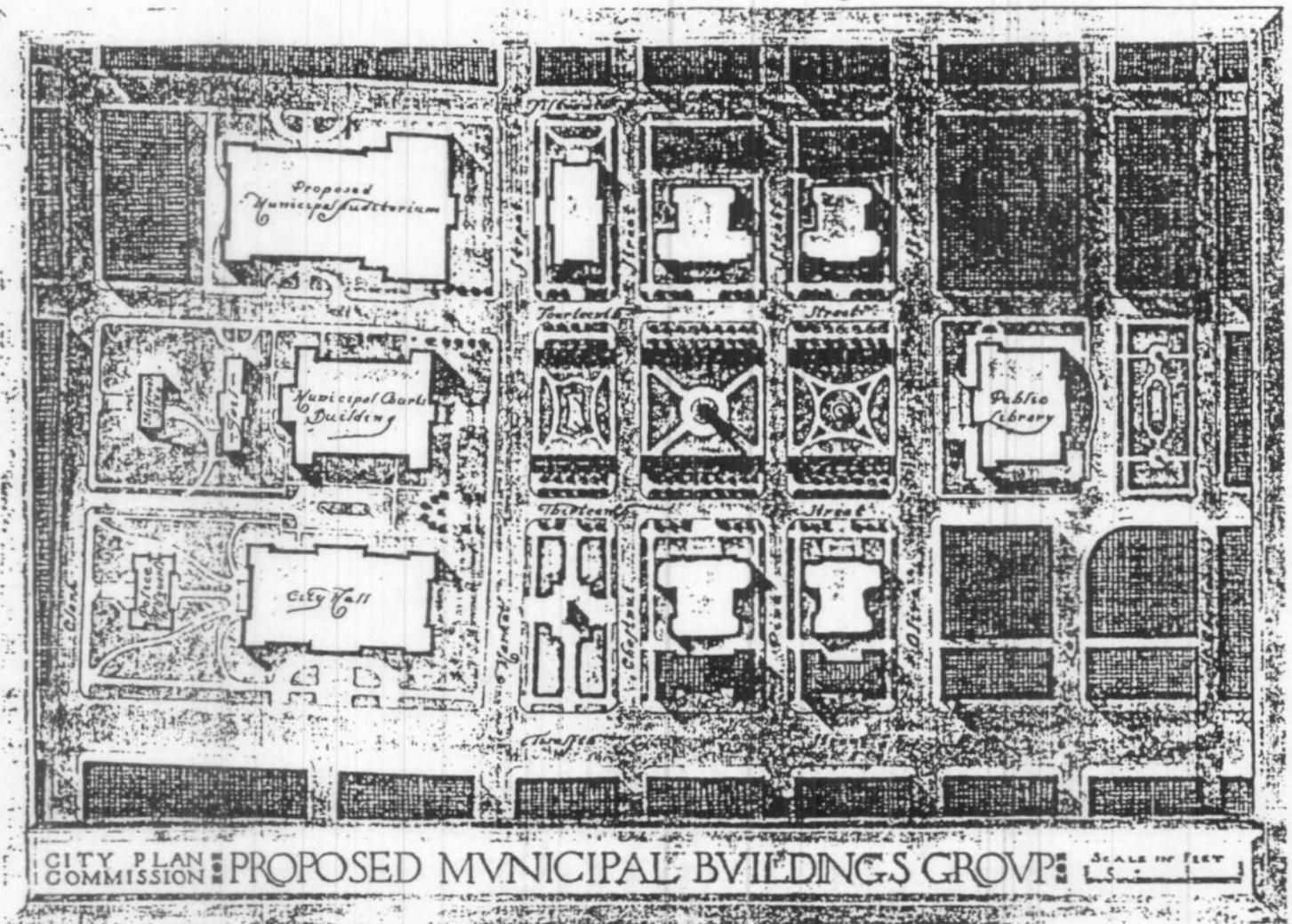


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Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri



The suggested Public Building Group Plan would necessitate the combination of the three blocks bounded by Olive, Market, Thirteenth and Fourteenth and the block bounded by Twelfth, Thirteenth, Market and Chestnut streets, and create in place thereof a mall on which the future public buildings would face.

Figure 13
Public Building Group Plan. City Plan Commission, 1919.



4282

720 000 FEET
(ILL.)

101 Opera House
100 Market Street
St. Louis, MO
Independent City

Zone 15
Easting
743550
Northing
4279150

38° 37' 30"
90° 15' 00"

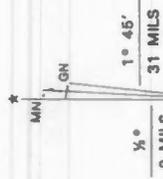
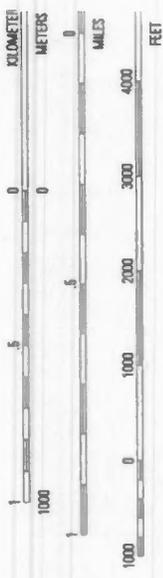
Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with U.S. Corps of Engineers

Compiled by planimetric surveys 1930 and 1933. Revised from
imagery dated 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from
imagery dated 1993. PLSS and survey control current as
of 1954. Map edited 1996. Contours not revised
Contours that conflict with revised planimetry are dashed
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83). Projection and
blue 1000-meter ticks: Universal Transverse Mercator, zone 15
10 000-foot ticks: Illinois (west zone) and Missouri (east zone)
Coordinate Systems of 1983

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27) is shown by dashed
corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 83 and NAD 27
for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic
Survey NADCON software

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

SCALE 1:2



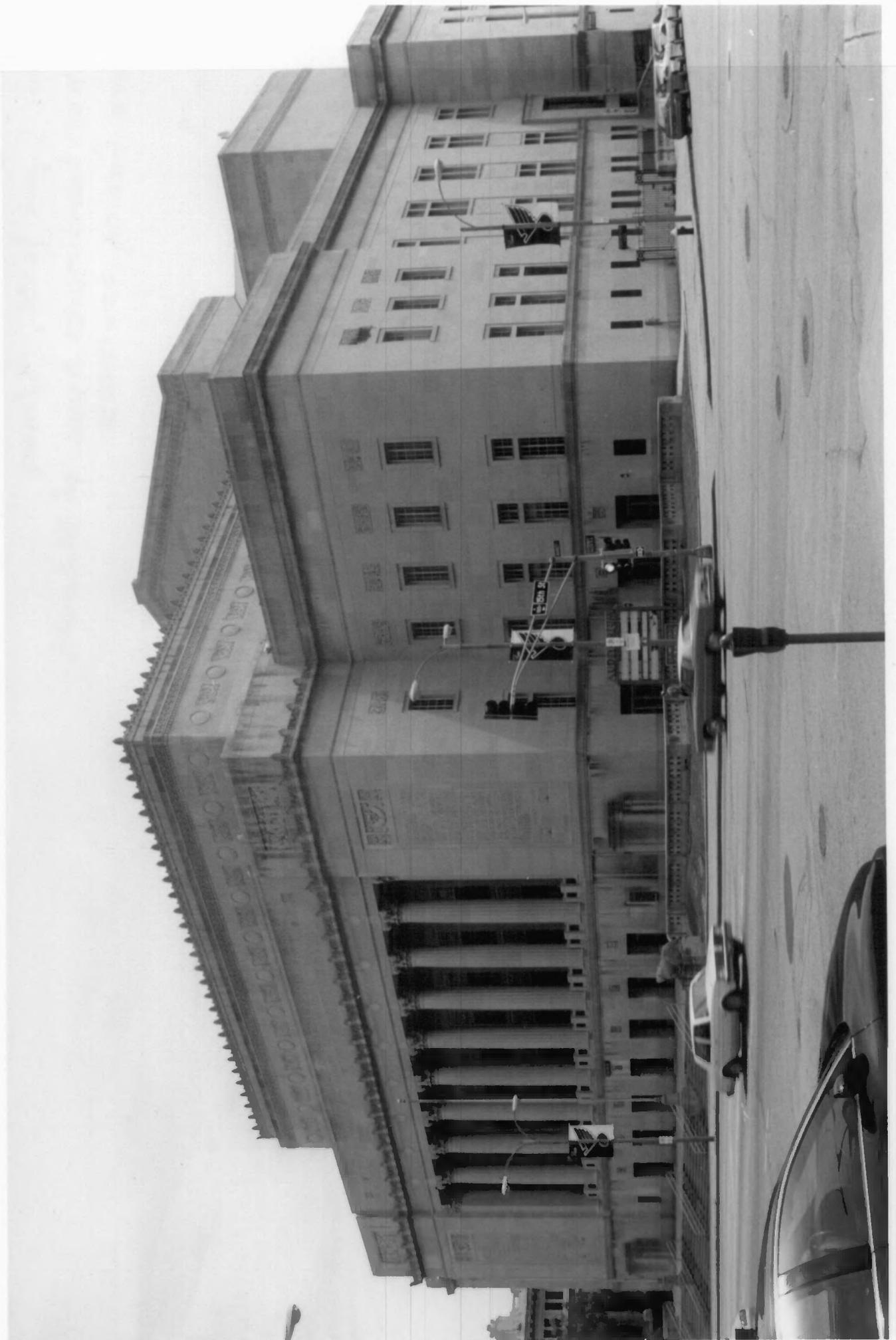
CONTOUR INTER
SUPPLEMENTARY CONTROL
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UTM GRID AND 1996 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER,
ILLINOIS GEOLOGICAL SURVEY,
AND DIVISION OF GEOLOG
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RI

Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], MO
Photo: Lynn Josse, 9/1999
negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis,
Camera facing southeast

Photo 1



Kiel Opera House

St. Louis (Independent City), MO

photo: Lynn Josse, 9/19/99

negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing SW

Photo 2



Kiel Opera House

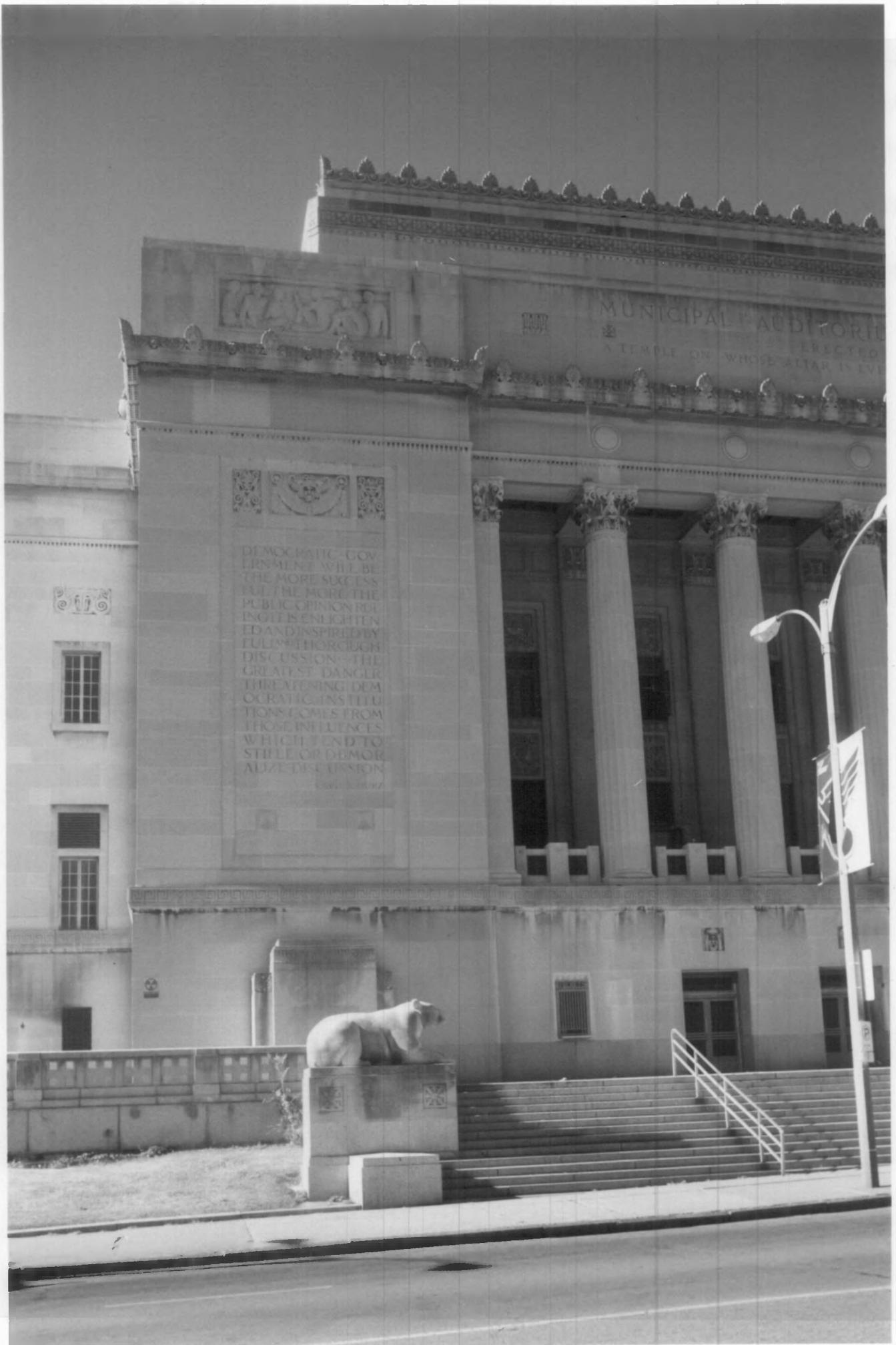
St. Louis (Independent City), MO

photo: Lynn Josse, 9/1999

negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis

camera facing south - facade detail

Photo 3



Kiel Opera House

St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Photo: Lynn Josse, 9/1991

negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis

camera facing SE to W elevation &

connection to addition

Photo 4



Kiel Opera House
St. Louis [Independent City], MO

Lynn Josse

10/1999

negative: Landmarks Association of St. Louis

Kiel Center addition, camera facing northeast

Photo #5



Kiel Opera House

St. Louis (Independent City), MO

Photo: Lynn Josse, 9/1999

negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis
camera facing SW to E elevation & addition

Photo 6



Kiel Opera House

St. Louis (Independent City), MO

photo: City Plan Commission

c. 1940

negative: Landmarks Assoc. of St. Louis

Market Street view facing east

(Kiel Opera House at right)

Photo 7

